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Mr. Larry Gottesman
National Freedom of Information Officer
(2822T)
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Gottesman,

I am a writer doing research on the Strategic Air Command of the 1960s, and particularly an Air Force B-52 crash near Goldsboro, North Carolina, on 24 January, 1961.

I am requesting, under the FOIA, a particular memo dated May 17, 1961, outlining the Military Liaison Committee's proposal for the recovery of a component of an atomic weapon from this crash. This component, known as a "secondary" still remains in the ground near the community of Faro, North Carolina and poses a potentially serious health hazard. I have a copy of the memo which is seriously redacted (see attached).

Those redacted portions were classified as restricted data as defined by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (see lower right corner of first page). The classification was cancelled on 5/25/11 (see upper left corner of first page). What I am requesting is a copy of the un-redacted memo.

I agree to pay up to \$25.00 in fees.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel Dobson", with a stylized, cursive script.

Joel Dobson

<http://www.thegoldsborobrokenarrow.com/>

000020906
(27)

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
OR CHANGED TO ~~SECRET~~
BY AUTHORITY OF Michael L. Kolbay
BY... DATE 5/25/11

This document consists of 4 pages
No. 6 of 7 copies, Series A

A. R. Luedecke
General Manager

Brigadier General A. W. Betts, USA
Director of Military Application

MAY 17 1961
USMC

MLC PROPOSAL REGARDING RECOVERY OF ATOMIC WEAPON COMPONENT

Symbol: MAPR:PRW

Reference is made to a letter dated April 3, 1960, from
General Loper to Dr. Seaborg on the above subject.

US DOE ARCHIVES
RG 326 AEC
Collection 1188
Box 1
Folder 4 Goldsboro 1/24/61

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The parachute on the first
weapon deployed and the weapon landed intact. The parachute
on the second weapon did not deploy with the result that the
weapon struck the ground with great force, penetrated the earth,
and broke up. The tail of the weapon and the major portion of
the case were found approximately 12 feet below the surface.

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DOE b(1)
The Air Force with the assistance of an Army Engineer unit
has carried on excavations in a recovery attempt since the
accident. There is considerable ground water in the area which
has made the operation extremely difficult. To date 14 wells
have been sunk in an unsuccessful effort to control the water
sufficiently to permit excavation. Further recovery operations
will require the construction of a caisson.

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DOE b(1)
DOE b(3)

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(continued)

OFFICE		SECRET	This document contains restricted data as defined in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954. Its transmittal or the disclosure of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited.
SURNAME			
DATE			

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(2)

A. R. Luedecke

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DOE
b(3)

The classification of the components is Secret Restricted Data.

The Commission staff has analyzed the problem from the following major areas of concern:

a. Security of Restricted Data

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DOE
b(1)

Calculations by the Strategic Air Command Operations Analysis Group indicate that the unit is at about 180 feet from the surface. Thus there is no possibility of either an inadvertent or deliberate recovery attempt being successful without the help of considerable heavy equipment in a costly time-consuming operation. The DoD is taking suitable and adequate measures to assure that such a project is not undertaken.

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DOE
b(1)

b. Cost Analysis

The material in the component is valued at about \$297,000. The total recovery costs will be in excess of an estimated \$273,000; such excess costs depending upon the ultimate depth of the excavation. There is now a need to depart from normal excavation procedures and resort to extensive engineering and construction efforts (cofferdams, caissons, etc.) if the recovery operation is to continue. The costs which can be reasonably estimated are as follows:

1. Expenditures to date	\$ 63,000
2. Cost of caisson	200,000
3. Site restoration	10,000
	<u>\$273,000</u>

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DOE
b(1)

(DOE ARCHIVES)

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A. R. Luedecke

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c. Public Health and Safety

The conclusions with regard to the biological hazards of the problem are based upon the analyses and considered opinions of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory and the Headquarters Office of Health and Safety.

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DOE
b(3)

"We can foresee no hazard connected with the uranium unless someone drilled a well immediately adjacent to the object and even if so we consider this hazard essentially negligible. Even if all the uranium could be dissolved (but it will mostly be in an insoluble form) dilution in one and a half million gallons of water would reduce the concentration below tolerance level. This much water is a very small fraction of an extensive water supply.

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DOE
b(3)

If the stainless is still intact, which we think likely, it will take a very long time perhaps centuries to corrode through.

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DO
b(3)

"We understand that half a gram per liter will cause diarrhea. Dilution of the total amount in only forty thousand gallons of water would reduce the concentration to that level."

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DOE
b(3)

As a result of the calculations and the probable depth of the unit, it was concluded that no hazard to the public health existed.

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The public information aspects of the problem have also been considered and it has been concluded that the DoD should make a suitable press release. The release should be designed to dispel any rumors and to assure the local population that there is no health or safety hazard to the public in leaving the squash in place.

It is recommended that we concur in the proposal presented by the Chairman, MLC provided that the Department of Defense insures that it retains a right to prevent excavations in the vicinity of the point of impact.

The Office of Health and Safety, Division of Security, Office of the General Counsel, Division of Biology and Medicine and the Office of Public Information have concurred in this memorandum.

If you agree with this recommendation, request you sign the attached letter to the Chairman, MLC. It is also recommended that this memorandum with its attachments be reproduced for the information of the Commission.

DOE ARCHIVES

Attachment:

Orig. and 3 cc's of proposed
ltr to Chairman, MLC fm GM

*distributed 5/13/61
F. Wabell*

1A&2A: Addressee
3A: Prod Reader
4A: Reader
5A: Locator
6A: DMA Files

plo

*distributed 5/2/62
Bill D. Blisking*

7A: ~~Prod Retained~~ *Secretariat w/o encl*

Ref: 1-3116 fm LASL
1-3936 fm H&S
1-3111 fm MLC
1-3730 fm LASL

Gen Counsel: Bio & Med: OPI:
Engstrom *Amos* *Cham*
5/17/61 5/17/61 5/17/61

OFFICE	Prod Br.	MA:Keto	MA:Anderson	MA:Betts	OHS	Security
SURNAME	<i>PR Wagner/alj</i>		<i>lma</i>	<i>lma</i>	<i>WFA</i>	<i>Riley</i>
DATE	5/17/61	5/ /61	5/17/61	5/17/61	5/ /61	5/17/61